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AUTHOR Ross, Betty
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ABSTRACT

Though Columbus State Community College (CSCC) offers a full range of courses in child development, these courses are not always suitable for or accessible to persons who wish to obtain certification as Child Development Associates (CDA's). To meet these educational needs, CSCC developed the Competency-Based CDA Outreach Training Program. The program included: (1) a CDA Overview and Portfolio Building class, which met weekly for 10 weeks; (2) one-credit hour of field experience to be fulfilled in an early childhood setting; and (3) two self-study modules, one in self-concept and one in cognitive curriculum, which were developed from existing course manuals. Over the 17-month project, during which 16 CDA's were trained to successfully meet day care licensing standards, there were successes as well as problems. Some participants felt lost in the classroom portion of the training, and the failure of certain child care settings to follow a developmentally appropriate curriculum caused problems for students and the project coordinator. However, in general, both the students and the children in their care benefited from the program. (ALB)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMPETENCY-BASED

CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE (CDA)

OUTREACH TRAINING PROGRAM

COLUMBUS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COLUMBUS, OHIO

Basis of a paper presented by Betty Ross, Pre-Kindergarten Program Administrator, Columbus State Community College at the

69th Annual Convention of the
American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
Washington, DC
March 29-April 1, 1989

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Program Profile Info
CDA Training Grant

Name of Program: Columbus State Community College
Competency Based CDA Outreach Training Program
Department: Social Services - Early Childhood Development
Telephone: (614) 227-2635
Contact Person(s): Dr. Alphonso Simmons (614) 227-2597
Ms. Betty Ross (614) 227-2635
Ms. Virginia B. Johnson (614) 369-4764 (home)
Address: 550 East Spring Street
Columbus, Ohio 43216
Time Frame for Funding of Project:
July 1987 - November 1988

Participant's Demograhics: Chart

Reasons for Participating:

All candidates needed to meet state day care licensing standards for in service training requirement. 16

On their applications to be included in the project, candidates indicated the following needs:

- To increase skills, abilities in child care 10
- To affirm current level of competence 1
- To increase knowledge in field 7
- To increase job security, career growth 2
- To receive paid tuition, and credentialling fees 1
- To complete CDA process, receive credential 8

Reasons for Dropping Out/Barriers to Completion:

Candidate #1: Family Stressors

Difficulty preparing written work (non high school grad)

Candidate #2: Moved from area; discontinued FDC program

Characteristics of successful caregivers -

Refer to demographic chart

Personal Qualities/Attitudes:
Self directed, dedicated
Assertive (some dend developed this quality)
Open, receptive to innovation, professional
Willing to implement and evaluate suggestions

Critical Element was the support of other staff in the center, and/or family of FDC providers

Range of Abilities
- Writing skills ranged from poor to excellent
- All candidates were functioning in a competent manner but increasesd their levels of competence from adequate to good, very good or excellent.

Recruitment and Selection Criteria:

See 1st quarterly report, Appendix F.

Training available to caregivers prior to this program was outlined in the grant proposal:

Columbus State Community College (CSCC) is the only public, state-supported two-year college serving the greater Columbus area. Columbus State currently offers an associate degree in Social Services with a major in Early Childhood Development. There is a full range of courses in child development offered by Columbus State in the Social Services curriculum. These courses are well designed to serve all the pre-service education needs of persons planning to enter the field of child care. However, these courses are somewhat traditional, are often taught during the day, and are not offered in a competency-based mode. For these reasons, enrolling in these courses is not always attractive to persons who wish to obtain Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. In addition, since they must earn the CDA while employed full time or half time in the field of child care, it is quite difficult for them to enroll in a college-level program simultaneously.

Differences in licensing requirements for providers and facilities:

Family Day Care: Homes are not licensed in Ohio, however, FDC providers in this project were registered with a local agency, Action for Children. Requirements for registration include:

- physical for provider (physician's statement)
- health inspection of home by Health Department
- fire safety home inspection (fire dept.)
- attendance at 3 workshops/year
- no more than 6 preschool - aged children at one time; no more than 3 children less than 2 years old

Center-Based Programs - licensed by State of Ohio, in compliance with minimum standards, and may be nonprofit or proprietary centers. (Of 13 center-based programs in this project, 2 were proprietary centers; 11 were non-profit.) Minimum staff: child ratios for centers are:

Infants (0-12 months)	1:5
Toddlers (12-18 months)	1:6
(18-30 months)	1:7
(30-36 months)	1:8
3 year olds	1:12
4 and 5 year olds	1:14

If early childhood teachers do not meet minimum standards for qualification associate or bachelors degree in early childhood education, child development, have a CDA, or degree in closely related field, such as home economics, they must attend 15 hours, of training per year, until they have attained 45 hours of such informal education.

Head Start Involvement - Providers employed by H.S. were not included in this project, since they are already readily served by the college. Area H.S. programs pay for this training through T & TA funds; the programs also provide CDA advisors for their employees who are CDA candidates.

Training Program Design

Each candidate began her "formal" involvement in the project by taking the CDA Overview and Portfolio Building class (see 1st quarterly reports, for syllabus and course description). The class met once a week, for 10 weeks; the candidates received 5 hours college credit. The class met for 2½ hours, (instruction time) followed by a 1 hour seminar, discussion time. Each candidate also received 1 hour credit for field experience, this requirement being filled by her employment in an early childhood setting.

An objective of this course was to begin development of the candidate's portfolio; at the end of the 10 weeks, each candidate had 2/3 of the required entries completed. The final 13 entries were prepared with the project director, in accordance with work setting/endorsement requirements.

The program's plan expected each candidate would complete training, and attain her CDA in 8 months. Allowing for the nearly 3 months in the college classroom, the majority of each candidate's training was delivered at the work site, in individualized instruction.

Most candidates did complete the CDA process in the planned time; 2 who were employed in programs that did not operate over the summer, took 11 calendar months. One candidate's training took 9 months to completion; another's took 11 months. This candidate had severe family illness with which to contend, had to secure a 2nd P/C Rep to replace a reluctant one, plus she faced some uncertainties regarding her dedication to the CDA project and process.

As information about our Outreach Training Project has been shared with other early childhood professionals, much interest has been shown in the Portfolio class. It is the only such class offered for college credit in Ohio, and was developed in response to needs of Head Start administrators. The class offers candidates the opportunity to work consistently on portfolio development with evaluation and feedback. This is preferable to a workshop format, in which enthusiasm may be instilled, but important follow-through support is not offered.

As the project was implemented, 2 self-study modules were developed; one in self concept, and one on cognitive curriculum. These were selected, because Self Concept is the "entry level" course for early childhood development at Columbus State Community College, and because it is such a crucial element in the lives of young children. Cognitive curriculum was selected for the second module, because candidates expressed the most confussion over this topic--the definition of 'cognitive', as well as how and what activities could be used to implement this concept in their settings.

The modules were adapted from existing course manuals, developed by Columbus State Community College faculty. The emphasis for these modules, was on material that could be easily read, understood, and implemented by the candidates. For candidates wishing to study more, bibliographies were included in each module.

The project director adapted and supplied materials from other established Columbus State courses, for candidates' individual needs. Materials most frequently distributed were on physical development, creative curriculum, and positive guidance techniques. The overall objective through the process was to enhance children's self-esteem and foster self-concept development.

Implementation Strategies

Information on how this project was implemented has been described, as well as how materials were developed and used.

Although we trained 16 successful CDA's, with no major problems (refer to quarterly reports for specific details), some concerns did require close attention:

- some candidates felt "lost" in the classroom portion of the training, and felt it was a frustrating experience. This is probably due to the fact that the portfolio class is not an "entry level" course; the structure assumes that the students have some knowledge of child development.
- The settings in which some of the candidates were employed, were not closely following/implementing a developmentally appropriate play curriculum. Thus, candidates experienced confusion over practices in their centers and writing appropriate (and acceptable) portfolio entries.
- Timing of class was cited by some directors as a problem primarily finding substitute staff , and the accompanying cost, so that their candidates could sttend class.
- The format of our Outreach Training Project presented unique conditions for delivering the training. Since training was administered at the candidate's work sites, the Project Director had to carefully choose appropriate times for conferences, so as not to disrupt the day care programming, staffing, etc. She also needed to carefully suggest "Strategies for Continued Development", to avoid criticism of the setting and other staff.

Unexpected successes included:

Apparent influence on other staff in the centers and FDC providers at monthly meetings (questionnaires were sent to supervisors of candidates to solicit specific comments regarding this). Co-workers sensed excitement of candidates and many had to cooperate to allow candidates to be in lead positions. As candidates implemented developmentally appropriate activities and CDA standards, they modeled professional growth and behavior for others.

- Children in programs where candidates work benefitted from increased use of developmentally appropriate practices. Candidates who already were using developmentally appropriate activities indicated that they better understood the rationale for what they were doing.

  Specific instances included mirror being installed in one center, which helped foster self concept and learning about feelings.

  Children began serving themselves, and learning centers were developed in another center. Positive changes were then apparent as children guided themselves through choices. Emphasis on creativity, was increasd, especially art activities in FDC homes.

  Social interaction between boys/girls was increased in another center after the project director observed that mostly boys self-selected play in the large muscle room during free choice time. She suggested that the teacher make room for 5 boys and girls at once, to promote this social interaction.

- Families = will realize benefits from children and staff, (indirect result). Children will be more secure in environments that are developmentally appropriate. P/C Reps expressed greatly increased awareness of quality programming for children, new appreciation for caregivers, and indicated a willingness to advocate for change, as appropriate.

- Peer Relations = of grantees in the project - candidates who attended the portfolio class together (8 at a time) formed a support basis for each other. Some called each other and visited at their centers outside of class time. Grantees frequently asked about each other as Project Director visited their centers.

  A picnic was held June 28, at a local park - 9 grantees attended as well as the Project Administrator, Project Director, and one early childhood faculty member from Columbus State. Several grantees brought their completed portfolios to share, as well as their experiences with the LAT. One new grantee attended (replacing the first drop out) - she expressed gratitude to the other grantees who befriended her and shared with her. She was invited to visit a program by a new CDA who had received her credential in the same endorsement.

  15/16 CDA's attended a dinner on December 5, 1988 to celebrate each other's success. Each candidate received a corsage and certificate from the College.

A difficulty arose repeatedly throughout our project concerning Parent/ Community Representatives. Six of the candidates had difficulty selecting P/C Reps; 2 of them had to secure a second P/C Rep during the project. Initially, the parents who were asked to serve on the LAT's seemed not to understand their role in the CDA process. They also were concerned about the amount of time it would take; this was a valid concern, since 62% of our P/C Reps were employed. As noted previously in this report, the P/C Reps were enthusiastic, following the LAT meetings, and frequently expressed, "I have learned so much!"

- Delivering the training to FDC providers presented the most challenges. They seemed to be "on call" at all times, as they managed their business, home, and family at the same time and place. (Both candidates who withdrew from the project were FDC providers). While the providers believed in the service they were providing, many others (parents, neighbors, etc.) saw them as "sitters."

Major Accomplishments:
Problems and Issues:

Expected number of completions: 16
Barriers hindering program entrance: See criteria for selection qualification
Number of participants who entered the program: 18
Barriers hindering program completion: See reasons for dropping out
Number of participants who completed the program: 16
Number of participants who did not complete the program: 2

Barriers hindering the CDA Credential process: Details have been listed elsewhere in this report.
Number of participants expected to earn the CDA: 16
Number of persons who earned the CDA: 16

Time Frame: 17 mon. (Grant) 13 mon. - from hiring of Project Director to last LAT meeting
Tuition or Credential Funds: $45,000
College approval Process:
State Regulations:

Concerns:
Dissemination and Utilization:
Networking with the child care community - explained throughout the report
Scholarship monies - none
Was the CDA Credential fee covered in your grant? Yes

What was the unique feature of your program? on site training

In summary, the Project Director invested average amounts of time with each candidate, as follows:

Phone calls	6 hours
Observations	4 hours
Visits, meetings, conferences	14 1/4 hours
LAT meetings	5 hours
Total	29 1/4 hours/candidate
	+ 50 class hours
	79 1/4 hours training time/candidate

Incidents which portray progress in acceptance of CDA's and their training in the College or community.

- As the Project Director fulfilled her role as CDA Advisor, she became aware of a state licensing specialist who was visiting centers where several of our candidates were employed. The specialist was excited to learn of the candidates' CDA involvement and was supportive and encouraging to them and their directors.

- During follow-up observations, of candidates who had completed the CDA process, the Project Director learned that many recommendations made at LAT meetings had been implemented. Two specific examples were:

  - an increase from 1 to 2 staff meetings/month at one center - one meeting for "general business," the other for staff in-service training.
  - one center has instituted an orientation for substitute personnel, to help ensure the consistency of the program, in the absence of a regular staff member.

WPC/1/89/SSA/oo

Candidate	Age				Race		Setting			Endorsement			Year Work Exp.				Ed. Level		Teacher					
	20-30	31-40	41-50	50+	C	B	Urban	Suburban	Preschool	Inf/Tod.	FDC	0-2	3-5	6-10	10+	H.S. Grad	Some College	Lead	Ass't	Withdraw	LAT	P/C Rep Employed	Full-time	
Betsy Akers	x				x		x		x			x				x	x	x			8/15	x		
Jane Baker		x			x		x		x						x	x	x	x			7/19	x	x	
Sandy Bohl		x			x		x		x				x			x		x			11/18			
Melody Boyer		x			x		x		x					x		x		x			5/3	x	x	
Jodi Eilers	x				x		x		x					x		x	x	x			7/27		x	
Julie Harris		x			x		x				x		x			x	x	x			11/21	x	x	
Marsha Heisley		x			x		x				x	x						x			6/10		x	
Connie Hicks	x				x		x				x	x				x		x			9/2	x	x	
Jean Hill		x			x			x		x			x			x	x	x			11/22		x	
Megeata Jones		x				x	x		x							x	x		x		6/23	x		
Angie May-Brewer	x				x			x	x				x			x	x	x			4/22		x	
Bobbie McComb			x		x		x		x					x		x	x	x			11/28			
Francesca Macklin				x		x	x			x			x			x	x	x			9/22	x	x	
Donna Patterson			x		x		x		x							x			x		5/17	x	x	
Patty Poe	x				x		x				x		x					x		x			x	
Lee Rhea	x					x		x	x					x		x		x			8/22	x	x	
Sandy Stover		x			x		x			x			x			x		x			6/9	x	x	
Mary Yanka	x				x		x				x			x		x	x	x		x			x	
TOTALS	7	8	2	1	15	3	15	3	10	3	5	3	7	5	1	16	10	16	2	2		10		